

REPORT.

The Majority of the Committee on Inspections, to whom was referred the "Memorial from the Board of Trade of the City of Baltimore, for a change in the present system of inspections," beg leave to report.

That they have had the same under consideration, and now report unfavorably thereon. Your committee have fully examined into the proposed policy of repealing the present inspection system, and unhesitatingly give it as their opinion, that it would be prejudicial to the best interests of the agricultural and commercial community.

It is not seriously contended, in any quarter, that inspections should be absolutely abandoned. It seems to be admitted that the universal testimony of commerce, in favor of inspection systems, of some kind or other, is irrefragable. The present agitation has arisen altogether from a diversity of opinion, as to the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the several systems which now exist in different States of the Union. In a word, the issue has been made between the system of State appointments, and that of licensed inspections.

Your committee presume that the Legislature is not prepared to abandon the principle upon which all inspection systems are based. That principle is conceded to be this, that it is necessary to the interests of both the buyer and seller, that there should be an honest and competent judge, somewhere and somehow, authorised by law, to decide upon the quality of the merchandize offered for sale. It is universally admitted, that the judge or arbitrator should be absolutely impartial. The question then arises, on the threshold of the inquiry, how can that be best effected? The answer is obvious: by rendering him independent. It cannot be denied that inspectors, appointed by the State and responsible to the appointing power alone, must necessarily be independent. They can have no possible motive (short of absolute corruption,) to favor either the buyer or seller, as their official acts and the incomes of their offices can be controlled by neither. They depend upon no one for patronage; and are answerable to none but the constituted authorities of the State; excepting in cases of false inspection, where they can be made to answer, on their bonds, to parties receiving damage thereby. If leather requires docking, in order that the shoemaker or saddler may be thereby protected against the purchase of 5 per cent. of water, the State inspector has no terror of the